

KEY ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The initial technical evaluation of the project and the scoping meetings with the public, Laguna Pueblo, the Anaconda Copper Company, and various Government agencies have resulted in the identification of the following as the key issues and concerns for the EIS. It is recognized that additional technical evaluation and consultation with interested parties may require that issues be added to, or deleted from, this list at any time during the preparation of the EIS.

Radiological Issues:

1. Radon releases from the disturbed areas.
2. Surface water contamination.
3. Sediment contamination.
4. Ground water contamination from backfill material.
5. Contamination of on-site buildings.
6. Contamination of the human food chain.
7. Contamination from the high-grade boulders along the Rio Paguete and Rio Moquino.
8. Off site contamination:
 - a. Homes within the Pueblo of Laguna.
 - b. Ore spillage along rail spur.
 - c. General area.
9. Total radiation doses from all exposure pathways.

Non-radiological Issues:

10. Future recovery of remaining reserves:
 - a. Unmined reserves.
 - b. Ore disposition.
11. Abandonment of underground entries (vent holes, shaft, decline, and adits).
12. Subsidence from underground mining operations.
13. Disposition of highwalls.

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14. Site stabilization:
 - a. Stabilization of Rio Moquino and Rio Paguate channels.
 - b. Stabilization of waste pile slopes.
 - c. Overall site drainage.
 - d. Arroyo cutting.
15. Siltation of Quirk reservoir.
16. Contamination of surface and ground waters.
17. Dispersion of airborne particulates during reclamation.
18. Revegetation of disturbed areas:
 - a. Construction of a producting soil profile.
 - b. Toxic element concentration.
 - c. Species propagation.
19. Protection of wildlife:
 - a. Habitat construction.
 - b. Endangered species.
20. Protection of cultural, religious, and archaeological sites.
21. Socioeconomic impacts:
 - a. Laguna employment during reclamation.
 - b. Structural damage to Paguate homes.
 - c. Alteration of Laguna lifestyles.
 - d. Impacts on health and welfare.
22. Aesthetic impacts.

23. Future land use:

- a. Grazing.
- b. Buildings.
- c. Farming.
- d. Disposition of non-inhabitable surface structures (rail spur, power lines, etc.).
- e. Home construction on site.

24. Floodplain management.

25. Long-term monitoring needs and procedures.

Of the issues listed above, the following are presently considered to be the most crucial to the EIS:

1. Radon releases from the disturbed areas. This issue represents the greatest potential health impact from the project, and must be effectively mitigated.
2. Off site contamination. Very little is presently known about the severity and extent of the off site radiological contamination; however, this was the most common issue raised during the public scoping process.
3. Total radiation doses from all exposure pathways. This is a very complex issue to address, and is the subject of extensive public concern.
4. Contamination of the ground water by backfilling with ore associated waste.
5. Site stabilization. Long-term stability of the site is critical to the success of reclamation, and will be an extremely difficult issue to quantify.
6. Future land use. Facilitating productive land uses and identifying inappropriate uses is a critical aspect of reclamation.